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SALMON P. CHASE.

THIS gentleman, a New Englander by birth, came to the West when a youth. A man of fine intellect and rare culture, he had a cold, unimpulsive temperament, that gave to his manners a dignified reserve that repelled familiarity, and interfered materially with his popularity. His fine presence, for he was tall, erect and admirably proportioned, with his grave manner, impressed the crowd, and created respect without liking. These qualities are, however, more potent in the end than more genial ones. Many a statesman, honored in his grave, owed his success in life to the *prima facie* evidence of wisdom, so acceptable to the popular mind, that is found in silent gravity. The late Tom Corwin, of Ohio, a man of genius and infinite humor, on one occasion, when lecturing me for my disposition to joke with a crowd, said :

“ Don’t do it, my boy. You should always remember that the crowd looks up to the ring-master and down on the clown. It resents that which amuses. The clown is the more clever fellow of the two, but he is despised. If you would succeed in life, you must be solemn, solemn as an ass. All the great monuments of earth have been built over solemn asses.”

Salmon P. Chase was anything but a solemn ass. His intellectual attainments put him at the head of his profession, that of lawyer, before they made him conspicuous as a politician. He was a hard student, and his thoughtful processes assimilated, well and rapidly, the information he acquired.

Looking at Chase through life, and regarding his characteristics since his death, I find now, as I found when we were friends, a mystery in the fact that he was ever a reformer. For his motive for action was not in his heart. He had no impulses of that sort that I could ever discover. The elevated plane upon which he guided his life, a singularly pure and just one, came of his stern sense of duty. This was not difficult ; for he had no youth. He

was born an old man in that respect, and had no heartfelt impulses to impel him to indiscretions. He never used tobacco in any form, nor wine, save as social decorum called for its use. He had passion without sentiment, and when he married it was with more regard for the proprieties of life than the gratification of a lover's mad impulse ; and herein lies the contradiction that makes him a mystery. He had a high regard for these proprieties of life, and none whatever for the law. Now reform is not reputable. Intrenched wrong finds its most powerful defense in its respectability. They who seek to undermine the respectable are low fellows, and the very name assumed by the reformer becomes one of reproach. Long after the death of our Saviour, to be called a Christian was to have applied a term of fearful stain which justified immediate and shameful death, as cruel and shameful as that awarded our God by the respectable classes of Jerusalem. When Salmon P. Chase gave in his open adhesion to the anti-slavery cause, he was called an abolitionist. He might as well, considering the effect, have been denounced as a thief or a burglar. His reputable friends (and having married into a wealthy and aristocratic family, he had many such) looked down on him with pity and contempt.

Chase, in his shy, awkward way, cultivated young men remarkable for their evidences of intellect or show of eccentricity. I was one of his protégés. I write this without claiming any compliment on that score. One defect in this eminent statesman was his ignorance of human nature. He did not know one man from another, save in the man's professions. He took those very men at the valuation acquaintance put on them. This ignorance added greatly to his success ; for we lose more through our suspicions than we gain through our credulousness. We are given to the strange belief that back of every man's act lies a selfish motive, and this, although we are taught by a study of ourselves that nearly all our actions originate in impulses or from circumstances over which we have no control, or from both, and seldom, if ever, from a cold, calculating consideration of how we may use others to our own advantage. At the same time, Chase's confidence gave his upright character its only taint in the eyes of the world. He had around him, from first to last, about the worst set of men that ever environed a leader, and these gave interpretation to many of his acts. These fellows, of course, used him to enrich

or elevate themselves, and the people at large held their master responsible.

On this matter of good or bad human nature Mr. Chase could reason, in a general way, with the terse epigrammatic force so peculiar to him, without being able to make personal application of his knowledge. I remember, for example, visiting the Ohio penitentiary with him while he was governor of the State. Returning, we walked to the Capitol. After a long silence the governor said, "There is not much difference between the convicts imprisoned in those walls and the ordinary run of people outside." This did not surprise me, for I had long before learned my friend's character blindness; but when he continued I was surprised: "These poor fellows are not wicked, they are weak; they have not sense enough to be cautious, nor have they enough strength of character to resist temptation. The law catches the small rogues; the big rascals are too wary to approach the net. I think sometimes that our criminals are not in the penitentiary, but in the churches. The cool, selfish villains wear the cloak of religion, and hedge themselves about with the intensest respectability. They are our bad men, and from them we suffer."

"Yes," I added; "that was the sort that crucified Christ. He suffered not for his treason, but that he was a low person—the associate of the poor, and an agrarian who taught that property was continuous theft, before that Frenchman made his discovery. The wealthy Moses and sons, the high priests, the aristocrats of that day and place, just sickened over such vulgar notions."

"You do wrong," said my friend, "to habituate yourself, as I perceive you do, to vulgarizing the great truths of revelation. It was an awful event, let the motives and passions of poor human nature have been what they may. We should see only our Christ crucified, and not the horrible crowd that did the deed without knowing what they did."

Here was no cant, not the slightest shade of hypocrisy in this rebuke. Chase was truly of a deep religious nature. He believed with the trusting faith of a child in the truths of revelation, not as an abstract thing separate and apart from his daily life. It colored all his character, and entered into the most minute details of his life.

In common with half a dozen other young men admitted to the bar, but not admitted to legal practice, I had the honor of Chase's intimacy, and it is amusing to look back upon the patron-

izing manner in which we sought to protect him. Of all shades of political opinion save that of anti-slavery, we felt a sorrow that our great man should be engaged in such a vile business as acting and laboring with abolitionists. To us, as to the community generally, an abolitionist was not only a negro thief, but an associate of negroes and a disturber of the peace. None the less did we cling to and seek to give Mr. Chase our protection.

He was to speak one night at a little school-house some four miles from Cincinnati, and notice had been served on him that if he did, he would be mobbed. This had no effect on Chase. He was a brave man, and a threat of violence only made him the more determined to fill his appointment. Finding our persuasion of no effect, we armed ourselves and made part of the little crowd assembled in the school-house to hear the anti-slavery advocate. Save ourselves, the audience was mostly made up of the long-haired men and short-haired women peculiar to all reforms. The room was small and lighted by a few tallow dips, which flared and sputtered from the air through the open windows ; for it was summer. The meeting being organized, Mr. Chase was introduced and began his argument. He was not a fluent speaker, and had a voice more guttural than resonant. With few gestures, he spoke in an even, unemotional way, as if addressing a court. He got little aid from the expression of his fine face, for being extremely near-sighted, he had a way of contracting his eyelids, as if he were turning his sight in on himself. He had uttered but few sentences, however, before a wild yell from outside, which seemed to go up from every quarter, startled the little audience, and immediately several eggs were thrown in, with great force, through the windows. The audience rose to its feet, the women screamed, more in wrath than fear, and the men gave utterance to more profanity than I thought the fanatical were capable of. We of the body-guard rushed out, firing our pistols right and left, doing no harm that I ever heard of, but putting the ruffians so effectually to flight that we had no further interruption of that sort. Pistols were things not counted on by the crowd accustomed to ride over abolitionists without resistance. When we returned to the house, Mr. Chase was wiping a rotten egg from his bosom with a delicate linen handkerchief, and he then went on with his speech with no other sign upon him than a heightened color on his handsome face. Through this sort of thing a refined, dignified gentleman

came up to be recognized, in the end, as the able leader, if not orator, of a party destined to conduct a great war, and control the government for a quarter of a century after. How he came to be an abolitionist in the first instance, is as strange as that, in the end, he should be thrust aside by the party that he had done so much to make possible.

It was in the office of Chase and Ball, on Third Street in Cincinnati, that the Republican party of to-day was born. Doctor Gamaliel Bailey, a man remarkable for his combination of thought and action, called the little group of strong men together. There were present Chase, Birney, Lewis, and others whose names I have forgotten, and before them Doctor Bailey laid his plan of an organization. He said it was absurd to have a party outside of the constitution making war on the government itself. While the organic law might be a compact with hell, it could not be successfully assailed in an open rebellion. The proper course was to accept the guarantees of the constitution as to slavery in the States, but to oppose its extension. This in the end would be the death of the iniquity, for as slave labor exhausted the soil it lived on, more territory was as necessary for its existence as the air we breathe.

This shrewd proposition was at once adopted by the leading minds of the anti-slavery class. The fanatics, however, for a time gave as much trouble to these practical chiefs as the Whig and Democratic parties. It was not until the fight grew fierce over Kansas and Nebraska that the rank and file swung into line, and, by holding the balance between the evenly-divided parties, as to numbers, became a power in the land.

I have often thought since, that, had the Southern slaveholders possessed the ability which distinguished these early abolitionists, what a different result we would be putting to record. If, instead of setting up a government of their own, these Southern leaders had fought for what they were pleased to term their rights, under the constitution and the flag of our Union, they would have had the sympathy of a majority of the North, and the co-operation of nearly the entire Democratic party on the free side of Mason and Dixon's line. But when they seceded into a confederacy, threw out an alien flag, and fired on Sumter, they changed the issue from a question of States rights, under the constitution, to an armed conflict between rival sections, and the war went on, not to save or destroy slavery, but to save or destroy the nation.

This was Chase's thought, as well as my own. I have often heard him say that we owed more to Jefferson Davis for his folly than to Abraham Lincoln for his cautious wisdom.

The Whig party that was born of the old Federal organization and Henry Clay, and had great men and great measures, without principles other than a conservatism of property privileges, went to pieces, and the anti-slavery organization fell heir to its votes. Before this, however, Chase, holding the balance of power, was first made Senator and afterward Governor of Ohio.

That man is great who rises successfully to the emergency in which he is called to act. Chase, in the Senate, represented nobody save Morse and Townsend, the two pivotal votes on which he was returned ; but his dignity and power made his sovereign State glad to recognize him as her Senator, at a time when our House of Lords held the highest political intellect in the land, and was not, as now, an incompetent collection of millionaires. As governor, he not only consolidated and held the Whig vote, but he drew over a large Democratic support of young men glad to recognize a leader of such brain and power.

When the newly-organized party met at Chicago to nominate a Presidential candidate, Chase stood prominent as an available man. The Seward party, fighting Chase, fortunately opened the way to the nomination of Abraham Lincoln.

President Lincoln called Chase to the Cabinet as Secretary of the Treasury. This was a casualty. Had Mr. Lincoln known of the war that was to follow his inauguration, it is not likely that he would have selected a man so entirely ignorant of finance, and all that pertains to that vexed business, as this man who had never given the subject a thought, let alone any study. An illustration of this is found in the secretary calling in the good Father Edward Purcell, of Cincinnati, to advise with him as to what measures were the best to carry on the fiscal agency of a great government, so strangely intrusted to his untried hands !

The Secretary of the Treasury proved an eminent secretary, on the fact I see demonstrated every day ; and that fact is that the man is the most successful in the business which he knows the least about. The man who buys to gratify his own taste, is the man who will be his own only customer when it comes to selling again. The ignorant man, seeking to cater to the tastes and wants of his patrons, is eager to learn and open to all information in that

direction. The manager of a theatre who does not know Shakspeare from Dion Boucicault, and looks to the box-office for guidance on the stage; the bookseller, ignorant of the inside of all books, who looks solely to the purchaser of books; the editor who writes down to the depraved tastes of the multitude; the shoemaker who looks to the corns and bunions of his buyers instead of his own, are all illustrations of what I say. Salmon P. Chase not only took the good father into his confidence, but listened with inexhaustible patience to the practical financiers, who knew less on the subject that made their business than any other class of men in the country.

The war came on. It was the costliest war ever known to a civilized people, for we had to pay cash for our experience. To get up a regiment called for as much money as to govern a State—not less than a million dollars per year for each thousand men. To put an army of seventy-five thousand armed men into the field, and to keep them there, bid fair to bankrupt the government. The secretary, in this awful emergency, found at his back an empty treasury and a ruined credit. There was no time to levy and collect taxes, and, had there been, the secession of the Southern States carried out our great staple on which our wonderful prosperity had been built, and the artillery that shot down our flag at Sumter utterly prostrated the business of the country.

The only way open was to borrow, and even that seemed closed to the anxious government at Washington. Capital is not only sensitive to danger, but from that very fact is selfish, and with no touch whatever of patriotism. We read of noble women contributing their jewelry to a cause, of pious men of God melting their bells into cannon, but we never read of money-getters fetching out their hidden bags under patriotic impulse in aid of a forlorn hope.

The country was aroused to a frenzy by the insolence of the South in firing on the flag of the Fathers, and men—God bless them!—volunteered to fight in such numbers that the government found difficulty in enrolling and arming them. Capital was also vociferous. It took the iron-bound oath of allegiance at all hours. It made speeches of much sound, if not eloquence, urging men to volunteer, but no man brought out his hoarded gold to aid the struggling government in its hour of peril.

The able Secretary lost no time in appeals to the Shylocks. He

turned to the noble, patriotic people, who were wheeling into line to the roll of the drums, for the credit he needed, and issued the greenback. A history of this transaction is curiously illustrative of the two men, Lincoln and Chase, concerned therein. Of course, the idea of issuing money directly by the government to meet an emergency was as old as governments themselves. But Amasa Walker, a distinguished financier of New England, had a thought that was new. He suggested that the notes thus issued directly from the government to the people, as currency, should bear interest. This for the purpose not only of making the notes popular, but for the purpose of preventing inflation by inducing people to hoard the notes as an investment when the demands of trade failed to call them into circulation as a currency. This idea struck Mr. David Taylor, of Ohio, with such force that he sought Mr. Lincoln and urged him to put the project into immediate execution. The President listened patiently, and at the end said, "That is a good idea, Taylor, but you must go to Chase. He is running that end of the machine, and has time to consider your proposition."

Taylor sought the Secretary of the Treasury, and laid before him Amasa Walker's plan. Chase heard him through in a cold, unpleasant manner, and then said: "That is all very well, Mr. Taylor, but there is one little obstacle in the way, that makes the plan impracticable, and that is the constitution."

Saying this, he turned to his desk as if dismissing both Mr. Taylor and his proposition at the same moment. The poor enthusiast felt rebuked and humiliated. He returned to the President, however, and reported his defeat. Mr. Lincoln looked at the would-be financier, with the expression at times so peculiar to his homely face, that left one in doubt as to whether he was jesting or in earnest.

"Taylor," he exclaimed, "go back to Chase and tell him not to bother himself about the constitution. Say that I have that sacred instrument here at the White House, and I am guarding it with great care."

Mr. David Taylor demurred to this, on the ground that Mr. Chase showed by his manner that he knew all about it, and didn't wish to be bored by any suggestion.

"We'll see about that," exclaimed the President, and taking a card from the table, he wrote upon it, "The Secretary of the

Treasury will please consider Mr. Taylor's proposition. We must have money, and I think this a good way to get it. A. Lincoln."

Armed with this, the real father of the greenbacks again sought the Secretary. He was received more politely than before, but was cut short in his advocacy of the measure by a proposition for both of them to see the President. They did so, and Mr. Chase made a long and elaborate constitutional argument against the proposed measure. "Chase," said Mr. Lincoln, after the Secretary had concluded, "down in Illinois I was held to be a pretty good lawyer, and I believe I could answer every point you have made, but I don't feel called upon to do it. This thing reminds me of a story I read in a newspaper the other day. It was of an Italian captain, who run his vessel on a rock and knocked a hole in her bottom. He set his men to pumping, and he went to prayers before a figure of the Virgin in the bow of the ship. The leak gained on them. It looked at last as if the vessel would go down with all on board. The captain, at length, in a fit of rage, at not having his prayers answered, seized the figure of the Virgin and threw it overboard. Suddenly the leak stopped, the water was pumped out, and the vessel got safely into port. When docked for repairs, the statue of the Virgin Mary was found stuck head-foremost in the hole."

"I don't see, Mr. President, the precise application of your story," said Mr. Chase.

"Why, Chase, I don't intend precisely to throw the Virgin Mary overboard, and by that I mean the constitution, but I will stick it in the hole if I can. These rebels are violating the constitution to destroy the Union; I will violate the constitution, if necessary, to save the Union; and I suspect, Chase, that our constitution is going to have a rough time of it before we get done with this row. Now, what I want to know is whether, constitution aside, this project of issuing interest-bearing notes is a good one."

"I must say," responded Mr. Chase, "that with the exception you make, it is not only a good one, but the only way open to us to raise money. If you say so, I will do my best to put it into immediate and practical operation, and you will never hear from me any opposition on this subject."

The people eagerly accepted the loan, which the capitalists were prompt to depreciate and dishonor.

No one can measure correctly the masterly management of this

statesman, who does not accept and appreciate the difficulties that beset his ways. The intense selfishness of this class, that owed its all to the government he was struggling to sustain, bid fair to be more fatal to us than all the armed legions of the South, fierce and valiant as they were. While our soldiers in the field, and the labor left at home, accepted the greenback at par, hungry, unpatriotic capital higgled over its marble counters, discounting the currency that was the life-blood of our government. It was not until after the fortunes of war took a turn and the "Lost Cause" through exhaustion staggered from fields that were disasters to it, although shouted over as victories, that the money power came out cautiously at first, not in aid of the Government, but to invest for a profit. Government bonds were bought with greenbacks got at a ruinous discount, and these same bonds were pledged for redemption in coin.

I write this without feeling against the capitalist. We must take the world as it is. I suppose a capitalist is as necessary to our existence as any other objectionable factor the necessity for the existence of which is a mystery. He does live, but his living was a sad obstacle in the way of success to our imperiled nationality. To appreciate, as I have said, the eventual triumph of Salmon P. Chase, we must know and appreciate the capitalist.

The peculiar power, the sacredness, that attaches to money, in the eyes of men, has always been a mystery to me. Now, it is accepted as the right of government, when threatened with violence, to go to the poor man's hut and bid him come out and shoulder his musket to fight for his government. The poor fellow, with more or less tearful leaving of the family of which he is the humble bread-winner—and without waiting to negotiate a gold-bearing bond—marches out to be killed or mutilated, with no other compensation than his miserable pittance, that, if wounded, attenuates into a pension if his government survives. If killed, there is the sweet ceremony of strewing flowers over his grave.

How the heart thrills to the memory of the noble response our poor men made to this demand! One remembers those broad-shouldered, handsome fellows, in the bloom of life, crowding the cars in laughter, amid the roll of drums, the waving of banners, with flowers thrown to them from trembling hands, and farewell smiles that covered aching hearts. And one remembers how they returned in wooden boxes, or limped home with mangled bodies,

or never returned, but filled unknown graves in far-off battle-fields. One recalls, too, the desolation that was like a low wailing undertone to the strains of triumph all over the land.

Well, if the government, in this way, can take the poor man's life, can it not take the rich man's money? What is there so sacred about this thing that it must be guarded above life? What is it in gold that the blood-stain does not tarnish, and why is it that what God shuts out from heaven as accursed should be our god on earth?

I hear the capitalist denouncing this as demagogism, as insincere and not true. Does not capital pay the taxes? Does not capital give these soldiers their wages and insure them their pensions? No, it does nothing of the sort, and you add insult to injury by the assertion. For a thousand years the wisest law-makers have been striving to make accumulated capital pay its share of taxation, and they are as near the impossible now as when they began. As well try to make the pyramid support itself on its apex. Taxation reaches down to the base; the base is labor, and labor pays all. The man riding to mill on a sack of grain does not relieve the horse under him by shifting the sack, even if he transfers it to his shoulder. The sons of the men who went out to fight are paying the debt that grew out of their fathers' service, are paying the pensions, and, more than all, are paying for bonds that have in fact been paid twice over before their redemption.

No better illustration of the stress under which the government labored can be given than the creation of the national banks. To bring these moneyed corporations, the banks, into accord with, not to say support of, the government that gives them protection, the most extraordinary privileges were granted them. To farm out the fiscal agency found in the creation of a circulating medium was no new thing, but to permit these corporations to purchase government bonds in depreciated currency, at a heavy discount, and then accept the same bonds at par as a basis for a circulating medium, was an arrangement that nothing but the poverty and distress of the treasury could justify. Secretary Chase claimed, in extenuation, that he meant this to be only a war measure, to cease when the armed conflict ended. That this extraordinary system rests entirely on the indebtedness of the government, and must cease when that indebtedness is paid, gives plausibility to his plea.

A national debt, however, of the magnitude of that left us by the war, is of slow liquidation. Before the eminent war-treasurer died he saw the consequence of his blunder, and that a costly and oppressive system of banking had been fixed upon the people for all time to come. It had a certain hold upon the favor of business men, from a false contrast that it offered between our present system and that of the old State banks which preceded it. This contrast is false, for the evil complained of in the banks of a State's creation was not in the legitimate banking they did, but in the currency they issued and on which they did their business. These were notes of the banks authorized by the States, and were at a heavy discount beyond the limits of their several territories. The war which obliterated State lines that existed under the old colonial superstition of sovereignty gave us a nation and a nation's credit for a currency. The national banks are precisely the same as the old State banks—no better, no worse; but the currency in which their business is done differs, and in this difference lies the benefit of national banking.

Secretary Chase saw clearly the evil he had inflicted upon the people he had served, and his anxiety to secure the presidency originated in his earnest desire to correct this one great blunder of his administration. He had called into existence a financial system, that instead of being firm, uniform, and safe, lived on a fluctuation which swings continually from one extreme to the other, and is, therefore, uncertain, unstable, and dangerous.

To understand this, it is necessary to recognize the fact that money, as a measure of value, is an abstract idea made practical by the government. Based on coin, it gets its use through the stamp or sanction of the government. The trading world, in the ages past, selected the material through which to express this idea of value—a material which above all others has a quality that prohibits its use as a circulating medium, and this is its scarcity. Were coin, gold and silver, abundant enough to serve as a currency, it would lose its great quality and be no better than iron and lead. When the government, then, coins and stamps the precious metal, it merely takes the necessary step to keep alive the visible symbol of an abstract proposition.

Money for circulation, through which exchange is facilitated, like all other commodities, is measured by the great measure of value. When therefore a note, of the value of one dollar, is issued,

it is not itself the dollar, for we read on it a promise to pay that amount, and its value rests on the credit of the government making the issue. In this the government does not differ from the individual. If the people have confidence, the promises of the government pass at par; if not, they fall below until, like the old Continental paper, or that of the Southern Confederacy, they cease to possess any value whatever.

It is, therefore, a popular delusion which tells us that the scarcity or abundance of this circulating medium affects prices. It is the paper that is fluctuating and not the products. We, accepting the general belief, cannot comprehend how it is that during our greatest depression in business there is a heavier volume of currency out than when trade is active and the times prosperous. The government, in its ordinary expenditures, may issue promises to pay as money, to the fullest extent, without creating trade or restoring confidence. A man may have his coffers stored with gold, let alone greenbacks, and he will not use five dollars to purchase a barrel of flour until he can see where that barrel can be placed at a profit.

What we mean by the evil of a swollen or a contracted currency is the evil of an over-stimulated or depressed credit. And this power we have placed in the hands of a few corporations. All our business is done on credit, from the greenback of the government to the book account of the grocer. Now, were trade dependent on the actual wants of the community, it would be in a measure stable, uniform, and safe. To stimulate this in a healthy manner the natural greed of humanity is sufficient. But there is such a thing as artificial stimulation, and such a thing as gambling, and herein lies the evil of farming out the credit of the government to a few corporations. It is in accord with their selfish interests to stimulate credit when trade is healthy and active, as it is their safety to contract when over-excited speculation ends and pay-day arrives. Now, while a man will not employ five dollars in the purchase of a barrel of flour until satisfied that he can sell at a profit, he may be induced to believe that a profit will be found in the future, or, what is more common, to make one of a combination which, controlling the market, can force a profit.

It is the duty of a government to give the people a circulating medium, and this to the fullest extent of its credit. Mr. Chase

saw this fact, and in it the error of his act in creating the national banks ; but he never could divest his mind of the popular confusion about money as a measure of value and money as a circulating medium. When Chief-Justice of the Supreme Court, he joined the majority in deciding that notes of the government were not legal tenders under our constitution. Whether unconstitutional or not, to one's common sense the absurdity of the conclusion confounds him. What the government issues the government is bound to receive, and that which the government deals in as money is, of necessity, money.

A man of culture seldom fairly appreciates the mind, however strong, that has not passed through the ripening process of educational training. This fact stood between Chase and Lincoln. The secretary felt rather than saw the superiority of his President, and attributed the masterful control of the greater man to the power of his higher position. In addition to this, Salmon P. Chase was the only member of the Cabinet who was shocked at the coarse humor of their chief. The Secretary of the Treasury had little of this quality in him, and the little he possessed was a refined sort quite foreign to the indelicate, coarse wit of Mr. Lincoln. Chase put on record the solemn fact that when the Cabinet was called together to consider the Emancipation Proclamation, the President opened proceedings by reading to the amazed secretaries nearly all of Artemus Ward's book, then just published. All the Cabinet, except Mr. Chase, laughed loudly over Artemus, and the President, looking in the face of his solemn Secretary, persisted, and with his constitutional advisers, laughed more boisterously than ever.

The fact had come to be recognized, by President and Cabinet, that Chase's disturbed condition was in itself a source of amusement, and Mr. Lincoln seldom lost an opportunity to entertain himself and others in this direction. Some of these occasions both Stanton and Chase related to me, the one in an aggrieved tone, and the other between bursts of laughter, and the reader may judge of their sort when I state that scarcely one would bear printing.

To these small matters may be attributed Chase's withdrawal from the Cabinet. The place was not only overladen with heavy responsibility, but rendered irksome by the President's treatment. He seemed to have no true appreciation of the labors and success

of his subordinates. All that Chase, Stanton, and Seward accomplished in their several departments was taken as a matter of course, and something by no means unusual. He expended no anxiety on the cares of his own position, lost no sleep, nor appetite, nor flesh, under the enormous weight placed upon his shoulders, and he could not comprehend why his subordinates should be troubled by a sense of responsibility, or seek comfort in praise.

Salmon P. Chase has been severely commented on for what is called his intriguing against his chief for the place of President. This is unjust. To seek the presidency is an honorable ambition, and Chase not only felt under no obligation to the man he honestly believed he had made a success, but his ambition was stimulated by the loftiest patriotism. He knew that unless he continued to hold command of the system of finance he had introduced, that system would cause more evil in time of peace than it had accomplished good in the hour of war. And experience is proving the wisdom of his prophecy. To-day, the government is kept on a war-footing by the very measures Chase inaugurated to end the war.

In addition to this, our Secretary saw the evil of an irresponsible military rule, which Seward and Stanton, under sanction of the President, had made possible. Chase never approved of this arbitrary power in which his associates delighted, nay rioted. "We are doing more to destroy self-government by these arbitrary arrests and illegal punishments in the North than the Confederates of the South in their attempt to wipe us out as a nation." "Again," he said, "the evil of war comes after the war; it leaves an army of cripples, an army of thieves, and an army of prostitutes. We shall suffer more from West Point than we have suffered from the rebellion. The taste for military glory will give us a succession of military imbeciles for rulers."

Having succeeded to all that made him eminent through independent votes based on Democratic doctrines, Chase appealed to the Democratic party for a nomination. He nearly succeeded. A drunken harangue, made by an eminent democrat the night before the nomination, lost him Ohio, and just enough votes to insure defeat.

The elevation of this troublesome subordinate to the position of Chief-Justice of the United States Supreme Court is generally

attributed by thoughtful minds to Mr. Lincoln's shrewdness in thus shelving a dangerous rival. I do not concur in this. Abraham Lincoln felt no fear of a civilian. He did have a wholesome regard for the military men the war had brought to the front, and the one man of all others he was careful to keep from that front, was the first idol of the Free-Soil, afterward Republican party, John C. Fremont. He recognized in the popular pathfinder a man of genius, who to a thoughtful mind added the qualities which go to make a leader of men. He sent Chase from the noisy arena of the political world to the solemn quiet of our highest court, with no other thought than that which generally actuated him, of finding the fittest man for the position.

The real biographer of this great man will regret that the subject was ever called to other duty than that which he last adorned. Salmon P. Chase had, to an eminent degree, a judicial mind and temperament. He heard with patience and judged with impartiality the testimony of all sides, and, to a quick appreciation of the truth, he added the highest courage to judge and determine. He found the silk robes of this high office only after the care which kills had sapped the most precious vitality of his perfect physique. What he might have done as a jurist in his prime may be learned from what he accomplished as Chief-Justice in his decline. His stay upon the bench was brief, but long enough to leave on the annals of the court the name of the one rival of the great Chief-Justice Marshall.

No account of Salmon P. Chase is complete without reference to his domestic life. It made, if not the larger, certainly the more important and more graceful part. Married thrice, he lost, in each instance, soon after marriage, the fair women he had selected, and, tenderly devoted to his household, he lived to be both father and mother to the two charming girls, in whose sunny presence he seemed to garner all the peace and comfort he possessed on earth. No one can remember him, who knew him at all, separate and apart from the daughter who, inheriting his intellect and force of character, added the charm of tact and womanly beauty that made his home a *salon*, where the gracious being, queenly in her deportment and popular in her sweet condescension, wielded an influence strange to this coarse American world of ours. This lovely and accomplished woman lived in her father, sharing alike his cares and his ambitions. She seemed to

die in his death ; for her brilliant career clouded into personal and domestic sorrow from the date of his funeral, so that the sad event is doubly sorrowful, and on the monument to his memory we may write a double epitaph.

DONN PIATT.